**‘Gorillas vs Guerillas’ from *Sunday Night***

**Background information:**

*Definition of guerilla*

**Guerilla:** member of independent military force, often revolutionary, which makes surprise attacks on enemy positions, supplies, etc.

*What is coltan?*

It is a mineral used in producing electronics, such as mobile phones, DVD players, video game systems and computers.

It is short for columbite–tantalite and is known industrially as tantalite.



*What do I need to know about the Congo?*

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is a country in Africa that has been at war with Rwanda and Uganda (neighbouring African countries) since 1996. 5.4 million people have died in these wars in that time. The country is covered in rainforest (towards the west, along the Congo River), plateaus merging into savannahs in the south and southwest, mountainous terraces in the west and dense grasslands extending beyond the Congo River in the north. High, glaciated mountains are found in the extreme eastern region. Although citizens of the DRC are among the poorest in the world, the country is widely considered to be the richest country in the world regarding natural resources; its untapped deposits of raw minerals are estimated to be worth in excess of US$ 24 trillion. This includes coltan as outlined above. Because of Belgian occupation during the late 1800s until 1960, most of the people speak French, although often as a second language with either their tribal language as their first or another African language, such as Swahili.

**Now, fill in the following responses as you watch the report by Grant Denyer for *Sunday Night*:**

**What is the issue?**

Saving the Eastern Molong Gorillas from poachers (who sell the gorillas on the illegal exotic animal trade) & miners (who both kill the gorillas for meat and destroy their habitat to mine for coltan to make mobile phones).

**What is the reporter’s (Grant Denyer) contention about the issue?**

That the gorillas should be saved.

1. **How do you know that this is the reporter’s contention? [remember the persuasive techniques you were taught last year!]**

a). the images-close up shots of the gorillas’ eyes, particularly of the babies

b). the words used such as “illegal mining”, “beautiful creatures” are emotive

c). extreme close-up shots of the guns (AK-47s), the guerrillas smoking,

d). the statistics used: “They only have 10 percent of the park under control at the moment and the other 90 percent are gun toting rebels.”

d). personification of gorillas: “Check that out, the whole family's in the tree. Look the big fella's on the move.”…makes audience liken the gorillas to their own family and, thus, feel more sympathy towards them & their plight.

Obviously, there are heaps more than this, so take your pick!

1. **Choose one or more of the following options in order to describe the tone of the segment:**
2. **Sarcastic**
3. **Frustrated**
4. **Helpless**
5. **Awe-struck when discussing the gorillas**
6. **Resigned when discussing the coltan, as though he knows no one would sacrifice their technology. It is very unconvincing.**
7. **What is your opinion and why?**

That we should definitely address the issue of the conservation of the gorillas, but with real knowledge and evidence. Obviously, this is just my personal opinion and when you teach this, you can say whatever you like!!!

1. **Given your opinion on the issue, was the reporter successful in persuading you? Why/why not?**

There is no solution offered, except the implied notion of rescinding our mobile phones. It is not mentioned that there are many others countries, including Australia, that mine coltan or that bigger issues such as third-world poverty and government corruption might also play a part in the necessity of these children to mine for coltan and, as a result, destroy the habitats of the gorillas. Therefore, it is not persuasive, even though the audience would naturally want to help the gorillas.

The context of the issue is barely explained, and while you can assume your intended audience have some general knowledge of Africa, much of what is necessary to know is not provided. Thus, the assumption is that the reporter does not himself know enough about the country, the illegal mining trade and related issues to be able to relate it to the audience. Again, this is not persuasive as it highlights a lack of research on behalf of Denyer.

Obviously, there is a lot more you could mention (the over-use of close-up shots of emotive images, such as the baby gorilla’s eyes, the ridiculous questioning of the zoologist: “Does it melt your little heart…”) so just use whatever you like in order to show students both good and bad pieces of persuasion.